

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT:

GEORGE MELENDEZ WRIGHT INITIATIVE FOR YOUNG LEADERS IN CLIMATE CHANGE

The National Park Service (NPS) is pleased to announce the *George Melendez Wright Initiative for Young Leaders in Climate Change* (YLCC) to provide a pathway for exemplary students in higher education (graduate students and advanced undergraduate students) to apply their skills and ideas to park-based challenges and solutions. The Initiative offers 12-week paid internships which allow students to gain valuable work experience, explore career options, and develop leadership skills through mentorship and guidance while helping to advance the NPS response to climate change. Successful students may be eligible for non-competitive hire into federal positions for which they qualify following completion of all academic requirements.

Develop 4th Grade Climate Change Curriculum in Concert with NPSA's Climate Change Study

National Park of American Samoa
Pago Pago, AS 96799

INTERNSHIP PROJECT BACKGROUND

Native forests in the Pacific face three potent components of climate change: altered precipitation regimes (e.g., drought), increased frequency and intensity of catastrophic storms, and increased temperature. This is particularly true for the forests of American Samoa, where tropical storms have been fairly frequent and are expected to increase with the advent of warmer ocean temperatures (Craig 2009). An additional force on Pacific forests is the invasion on non-native plant and animal species that have the capacity to exacerbate the direct components of climate change on native forest composition, structure, and function. Given that native forests across the Pacific provide critical functions to humans and all associated organisms (e.g., biodiversity, habitat for fauna, water, wood and non-wood products), we are compelled to understand to the extent possible how they will respond to climate change forces – both direct and indirect.

INTERNSHIP PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The American Samoa Government (ASG) and National Park of American Samoa (NPSA) partnership will join forces to implement climate change research that directly supports conservation of native flora and fauna on Tutuila and Ta'u Islands, two of the largest-forested Islands of American Samoa. The proposed climate change study on the Tutuila and Ta'u islands will help us understand the impacts of these islands regarding repeated cyclone events which damage much of our vegetation and facilitate the spread of invasive species, increase temperature and precipitation regimes. This is the first study conducted between these two mountainous islands which involve a series of sea-to-summit forest plots that will aid the identification of extant rare plant and wildlife habitat and provide a basis for locating future suitable habitat consequent to predicted patterns of vegetation change.

Climate change is presently a threat to American Samoa and more needs to be done to educate and raise awareness about the effects of climate change both afar and at home. There is also a lot of research being done on the effects of climate change on the marine environment with very limited information concerning effects of climate change to the rainforest community. The proposed climate change internship would seek to attract interested students who would be involved with on-going terrestrial research on Tutuila and Ta'u islands. The intern will work closely with NPSA's natural resource team to understand the effects of climate change in our rainforest community. This intern will help develop community-based curriculum that promotes awareness of local youth about the threats posed by climate change to their islands.

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Be fluent in Samoan and English language (writing and speaking).
2. Have at least one year of work experience in government or private sector.
3. Be able to perform the physical rigors of the program which include hiking over steep, uneven surfaces. Bending and lifting movements are also involved.
4. Have 1-3 years' experience in local school curriculum development for American Samoa.
5. Have four years of public speaking experience.
6. Currently an upper-level undergraduate or graduate student at the time of internship.
7. Have computer or other related skills. Be familiar with Microsoft applications.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The intern will be paired with the Terrestrial Program's program leaders and University of Hawaii education professors to develop community-based curriculum and outreach programs after spending five weeks immersed in climate change research with the field crew. The intern will learn about the negative impacts of invasive species to our native flora and fauna including how park staff resolves these threats by obtaining funding and involving village youth to restore their native Samoan forest. In addition, the intern will learn how to utilize current models to store and analyze field results and transform it into a presentable format. The intern will learn how to use various technologies such as GPS units, Arc GIS 10.2, digital cameras, and other tools to create and maintain a research database. The intern will also participate in the consultation process with traditional village councils to obtain access into research sites.

DATES OF POSITION

The dates of the position are flexible. Ideally the intern will work 480 hours between June 15 and September 30. However, earlier and later start and end dates can be arranged.

COMPENSATION

This initiative supports one student at \$15 / hour for 12 weeks, or 480 hours.

HOUSING

Park housing is not available for this internship. Please contact NPSA for more information.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

American Samoa is in the South Pacific Ocean, between the Equator and the Tropic of Capricorn. A tropical climate prevails. Temperatures are warm or hot year-round (high 70's to low 90's F) with high humidity. Rain showers are frequent. Rain showers may last only for a few minutes, or last all day. The average annual rainfall in the drier portions of the island is 125 inches to as much as 300 inches in the highest mountains. Tropical storms are more prevalent during the rainy season (November to May). Warm, humid and rainy year-round, but there is a long, wet summer season (October through May) and a slightly cooler and drier season (June through September).

The National Park of American Samoa (NPSA) protects the tropical rainforest, fruit bats, coral reefs, and the Samoan culture. NPSA was created by a 50-year lease agreement between seven park villages (Pago Pago, Fagasa, Vatia, Afono, Ofu, Faleasao, and Fitiuta), the Governor's Office, the Department of the Interior, and the National Park Service. Most of the park staff is native Samoans. Rainforest research is conducted in the field, along with administrative staff serving in a support capacity. Park headquarters are located in Pago Pago village. Training and proper equipment will be provided to the intern upon arriving at NPSA.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Park Service Supervisor:

Tavita P Togia, Terrestrial ecologist

National Park of American Samoa

[Tavita togia@nps.gov](mailto:Tavita_togia@nps.gov) (684) 633 – 7082, X50

Project Advisor:

Pauline W.U. Chinn,

Professor, Curriculum Studies, University of Hawaii at Manoa

chinn@hawaii.edu (808) 956-4411